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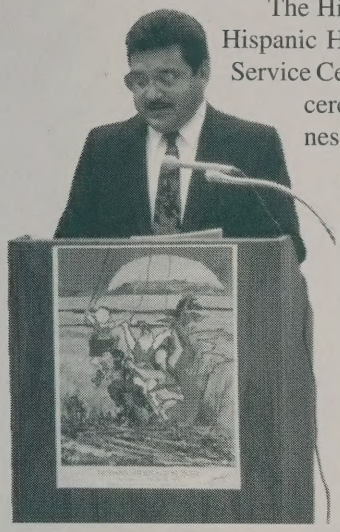
The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter October 1993

CENTER SCENE

ON THE HEP SIDE

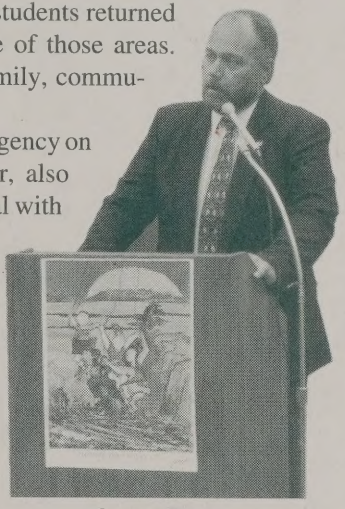
National Hispanic Heritage Month Observed



Robert Mansanares

The Hispanic Employment Program (HEP) sponsored a National Hispanic Heritage Month celebration on September 15, 1993, at the Service Center. Acting Service Center Director Al Wright opened the ceremony by stressing the importance of increasing both awareness and appreciation of different cultures.

The keynote speaker for the event was Robert Mansanares, Regional Director for the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP). Mansanares once read: "We must learn, think about what was learned, and apply that to life experiences." To explain this, he shared his knowledge of historical events in Colorado's San Luis Valley and their impact on the Hispanic way of life there today. For instance, he explained how Spanish-speaking people acquired land through land grants in the 1830's and 1840's. In the 1880's and 1890's, land deals were made, conspiracies arose, and isolation of residents occurred. During World War I, soldiers brought new perspectives to the area, but movement out of the valley had begun. Then new and existing fraternities began to address oppression in the area. Eventually education became an issue, and the Migrant Action Program was begun to allow Hispanic youth access to higher education. Many of these students returned to their communities, thereby raising the educational base of those areas. Mansanares emphasized, "We must maintain interest in family, community, state, and country—we are all part of the whole."



Carlos Guerra

Carlos Guerra, Coordinator of Youth Programs for the Agency on Human Rights and Community Relations, City of Denver, also spoke during the ceremony. In his position, he has had to deal with crime, perceptions of crime, and violence in some Denver neighborhoods. He recently became an intermediary when a citizen wrote to the Guardian Angels about starting a chapter in Denver. The Guardian Angels are a group of volunteers who are expert community organizers. They don't come here to patrol our neighborhoods—they share their experiences and help form neighborhood watches, inner city youth programs, senior escort programs, etc. They train local volunteers to patrol neighborhoods—their "uniformed" presence (t-shirts and red berets) helps empower the community to regain the quality of life it desires. Guerra said, "As citizens, as parents, and as neighbors, we have a responsibility in all of this. Block by block, street by street, we can reclaim our city. We can make our streets safe for our kids to play on."

The ceremony was followed by a reception and refreshments.

As part of National Hispanic Heritage Month, a video of last June's Denver Federal Executive Board/Hispanic Employment Program Council's diversity awareness seminar will be shown again on October 13 at 10:45 a.m. in the Building 50 conference rooms.

Combined Federal Campaign Fair
October 14 10:00 - 2:00
Army Reserve Bldg., First St. and North Ave.

LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

After almost 25 years, the Data Abstracting Section of the Branch of Photo Imaging will complete its primary job of collection and verification of cadastral field note data. The section began in July 1969, as part of the old Microfilm Project, which was then located in the Portland Service Center. The Project moved to the Service Center in Denver in 1974; shortly thereafter, it became the Branch of Micrographics, and then the Branch of Photo Imaging.

The Data Abstracting Section is primarily responsible for data collection and editing, generation of Computer Output Microfilm (COM) Indexes for survey field notes, and printing of microfilm, filming instructions for the Micrographics Lab. Through the years the work has been done on the Burroughs, the many upgrades to the DPS 8000, and the Level 6, and current plans call for the Section to be one of the first to convert to the Target System.

Data have been abstracted from over 21,000 survey field notebooks, and 36 data bases containing 1.6 million records have been created. Working with all of these records and data bases requires 20 programs containing over 40 different report options. Sometime in 1994, the initial abstracting and editing of data will be complete, and the Section will switch to working only with new data generated by State Office survey crews. There is a light at the end of the tunnel after all!

PERSONNEL NEWS

New Employees:

Regina Lefort, Land Surv., SC-329
Paul Myer, Nat. Res. Spec., SC-212
Gary Slimak, Financial Sys. Analyst, SC-613

Separations:

Ray Harpin, Land Surveyor, SC-675
Marilyn Myers, Supv. Cart., SC-329

FINANCE FROM A STAFF ASSISTANT'S PERSPECTIVE

by Jeanette Porter

Letters, we get letters, we get stacks and stacks of letters. Remember this song from the Perry Como Show? Well, in Finance, we get numbers, we get stacks and stacks of numbers. From my perspective it is like being in a deep black hole with no hope of ever climbing out!!

Seriously, though, this is a very busy, high pressure position due to the volume of work and the short turnaround time. We do monthly, quarterly, semiannual, and annual reports. Some go to the Washington Office, some to Treasury, and some to other agencies. Reports are sent to our office from other offices or agencies, input by accountants or accounting technicians, and ultimately typed by me, along with cover letters or memos as necessary. This is, of course, in addition to normal correspondence, requisitions, training forms, etc.

Some of the reports, including other agency (OPAC) bills, are transmitted directly to Treasury on the Government On-Line Accounting Link System (GOALS). I type approximately 75-125 OPAC bills each week. Reports of Budget Execution (SF-133s) are also transmitted on GOALS once a month. There are 31 different funds with 16 items for each fund, which means many, many columns of numbers. There are also other funds which are not transmitted over GOALS, but are sent with a cover letter to other agencies. There are seven different agencies and each agency has from 1-31 attachments of SF-133s.

Did you ever get a bill for collection from Finance? If you have, I may have been lucky enough to type it for you. You can thank me at any time! We send out approximately 50 bills each month. Many are sent due to an error in the coding for health benefits, an incorrect pay code, or some other error. Therefore, it is very important that you check all your leave and earning statements to detect any changes. If you find something that doesn't make sense, you should call Personnel or Payroll to check on it. Other bills are sent when people receive a replacement paycheck and their regular paycheck, and cash both! A nice trick if it works! There are also bills for travel advances not repaid and moving expenses above and beyond the allowed. Many of the errors are beyond our control.

Checks, we get stacks and stacks of checks! Payments to BLM from individuals and companies are sent to Finance and entered by me, the Collection Officer, on an abstract listing of checks each day. We receive checks (and sometimes cash) for as little as 1 cent and as large as hundreds of thousands of dollars. We also receive money orders and cashier's checks. If you serve on a jury, you must send any payment received to Finance. You can't receive pay from both BLM and the court! Too bad!!

As many of you travelers know, Professional Travel delivers your airline ticket to the Division of Finance. As many of you also know, no Travel Authorization, no ticket!! We receive approximately 50 tickets each week.

As you can see, as Staff Assistant for the Branch of General Accounting, I handle a variety of duties each day, which keeps me from getting bored. How can one be bored with stacks and stacks of money?

INTEGRATING GREEN WITH SAFE AND CLEAN

In addition to providing traditional engineering design and support functions to BLM field offices, the Branch of Engineering Services is integrating green with safe and clean—the green refers to the environment and the safe and clean to industrial hygiene.

The Branch's newest member, Ken Morin, is an environmental engineer. Ken's principal mission involves the Environmental Compliance Assessment of Facilities (ECAF) for the vast number of Bureau facilities. Assessments are performed, upon request by a State Office, to determine a facility's compliance with Federal and State environmental regulations. The goal is to assist BLM managers in identifying compliance issues and the resources necessary to correct them. Ken also conducts water quality surveillance at certain recreational sites to ensure no public health problems exist, and determines whether existing water supplies at recreation sites need to be upgraded to provide safe, quality drinking water. In addition, he is responsible for developing specifications for underground storage tank removal and pit reclamation, photographic waste and battery disposal, and training. This work is coordinated with the Hazardous Material Management Section, Division of Resources.

Kathy Hoffman and Ken Morin (SC-672)

The Branch's industrial hygienist, Kathy Hoffman, handles health issues for the SC and the Bureau. She works with the SC's Safety and Occupational Health Specialist, Duane Blamey, to protect the welfare of BLM employees. Kathy investigates problems such as indoor air quality, ergonomics, and asbestos. She was on hand during the asbestos episodes in Buildings 40 and 50 to ensure that there was contractor compliance for the cleanup or isolation of the asbestos and that tests were conducted using air samples. Kathy is the Contracting Officer's Representative for interagency agreements with the Public Health Service involving medical surveillance for law enforcement and hazmat personnel. She has also been involved with radon testing and water quality testing, and has investigated uranium in mine tailings and the affect of the Hantavirus episode on archaeological excavation efforts.

At the end of the year, the Chemical Inventory Program will become the responsibility of the Branch. This program will provide centralized management of hazardous materials inventories throughout BLM. The goal of the program is to reduce use of and exposure to hazardous chemicals. The Branch's team of professionals and technicians are working together to make sure BLM is at the forefront in environmental, health, and safety issues.